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(1) Editorial: We welcome the parliamentary defense secretary's
prescription for continuation of refueling mission

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)

October 7, 2009

Parliamentary Secretary of Defense Akihisa Nagashima has expressed
the view that the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in
the Indian Ocean must be extended by amending the law in a way
requiring prior Diet approval.

The government plans to terminate the refueling mission without extending the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, which is to expire next January. The refueling mission, which has earned a high international reputation, is part of the war on terror. Nagashima's statement was a warning that ending the refueling mission would undermine Japan's national interests. We think his statement, made under heavy restrictions as a member of the government, is appropriate. We support his statement.

Although Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has expressed his intention to look into such options as civilian support to Afghanistan, no specific plan for personnel contributions has taken shape. The government must share the view that continuing the refueling mission is the necessary and pragmatic option.

The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, among others, have externally indicated that the government would "not simply extend" the refueling mission - an expression leaving the door open to (the extension of the refueling mission) in comparison to "ending (the mission)." But they have not indicated any specific response. Nagashima's statement stepped in there.

The current law requires ex post facto approval by the Diet. (Nagashima's) idea is to change this requirement into prior Diet approval so that (a government decision to keep the refueling mission going) will not constitute a "simple extension." The ruling camp, including the Democratic Party of Japan, campaigned for this summer's House of Representatives election premised on putting an end to the refueling mission. As such, building consent on the

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policy shift in the ruling coalition will not be easy. However, we want them to give top priority to the defense of Japan's national interests.

Amending the law governing the Self-Defense Forces' overseas activities must be an effective solution. The adoption of a prior approval system can help increase the Diet's role in dispatching the SDF overseas.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is reportedly considering submitting to the upcoming extra Diet session a lawmaker-sponsored bill to amend the special measures law for extending the refueling mission. It is desirable for the DPJ and DPJ to cooperate. It is regrettable that Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa immediately brushed aside Nagashima's statement, saying, "Extension is not the option."

Kitazawa is reluctant to dispatch SDF troops to Afghanistan in place of the refueling mission. What is Japan going to do with the war against terrorism then? We want to see him make a pragmatic decision as defense minister.

In response to a visiting British cabinet minister's request to continue the refueling mission, the Prime Minister said, "I would like to look into what kind of cooperation will be appreciated by the countries engaged in the war against terrorism." The answer is already there. The government must turn around its policy.

(2) World will be disappointed if SDF's refueling mission in Indian Ocean ends

SANKEI (Page 8) (Full)
October 6, 2009

Bruce Weinrod, former U.S. secretary of defense representative Europe and defense advisor to the U.S. Mission NATO

It is extremely regrettable that the new Japanese government's first new major security policy measure after its inauguration was a vow to terminate the Self-Defense Forces' refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. I think it is unfortunate (for the Hatoyama administration) to start its policy toward the United States in such a way. The termination of the SDF's refueling mission would put Japan at a disadvantage symbolically and practically.

Not only the United States but all 28 North Atlantic Treaty Organization members have participated in the war on terror in Afghanistan, which Japan has supported. The United Nations, too, has been deeply involved in military operations. Besides NATO members, many countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Finland and Georgia, have participated in military operations. The United Nations has dispatched a number of troops. A great number of NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) from around the world have participated. If a security threat in Afghanistan is left unaddressed, it will become a threat not only to countries surrounding Afghanistan but to the entire world.

Both the Democratic and Republican parties in the United States have strongly supported operations in Afghanistan against the Islamic fundamentalist group Taliban and the Al Qaeda international terrorist network. However, the Afghan mission is fraught with fresh challenges. The American public's support for the war has begun to

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waver. The more difficulties the U.S. Obama administration faces, the more significant becomes Japan's assistance.

Until this summer, as secretary of defense representative Europe and defense advisor to the U.S. Mission NATO I was involved in military operations in Afghanistan and negotiated with European countries. All the countries engaged in those operations would be disappointed if Japan were to withdraw now.

Although the Obama administration would probably be dismayed at a pullout of the SDF from the Indian Ocean, it would perhaps not express its disappointment for the sake of the fundamental goal of maintaining a strong Japan-U.S. alliance. The reason is that the Obama administration does not want to make the overall relationship with Japan worse at this juncture. On the surface, the U.S. government might squarely accept Japan's decision to withdraw from the Indian Ocean, releasing a statement that it expects Japan's cooperation in other areas. It might handle the issue as a matter of minor importance.

However, the Obama administration will probably be deeply disappointed. Japan's withdrawal at this time might raise the basic question of what constitutes an alliance partner.

(3) MOFA possessed record of 1968 meeting of vice foreign minister, U.S. ambassador on secret nuclear agreement

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 3) (Full)
October 7, 2009

It was learned on October 6 that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) possessed a document recording exchanges between then Vice Foreign Minister Nobuhiko Ushiba and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Alexis Johnson in 1968 in which the two officials confirmed the contents of a secret agreement to allow U.S. military vessels carrying nuclear arms to transit Japanese waters and call on Japanese ports.

This was revealed in a Kyodo News interview with a former senior official who served as the director general of MOFA's Treaties Bureau (now the International Legal Affairs Bureau).

His remarks reveal an example of unofficial talks between the Japanese and U.S. governments over interpretation of the secret nuclear deal made in 1960. The record of this meeting was kept as a top-secret document by MOFA's North American Affairs Bureau and the Treaties Bureau at least until the late 1990s.

MOFA's team investigating the secret nuclear deal, formed by order of Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, is currently examining 3,700 files. Whether or not this document can be located will be one focus of attention.

According to the above ex-MOFA official, the exchanges took place between Johnson and Ushiba and other Japanese officials during discussions of the secret nuclear accord while making an inspection tour of Iwo Jima on January 26, 1968, before the reversion of the

Ogasawara Islands to Japanese administration. Director General Fumihiro Togo of the North American Affairs Bureau, who was present at the meeting, drafted the document.

On the same day, Johnson reported on the meeting in a classified cable to the U.S. government. The cable has been declassified.

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(4) Interview with U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Geithner: Economic talks should focus on substance instead of formality: Shows strong eagerness to reform G-7

ASAHI (Page 9) (Full)
October 6, 2009

Toshihiko Ogata, Istanbul

Referring to international economic discussions, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Geithner in an interview with the Asahi Shimbun and various other dailies said, "We need to be careful so as not to overly focus on writing a joint statement (only for formality's sake)." He thus earnestly hinted at the need to reform the meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of Seven nations (G-7). This statement by the treasury secretary of the U.S., the leader of the G-7, could accelerate calls for its reform.

Geithner gave a joint press conference to media organizations of eight countries, including Le Monde of France and Caijing Magazine, a Chinese economic journal, as well as the Asahi Shimbun.

Geithner, in speaking of international conferences in general, said, "We should be careful not to overly focus on formality instead of substance." He made this remark in response to a view heard in the U.S. that participants in the G-7 do not exchange unvarnished opinions, but rather devote time to writing a joint statement each time."

Concerning the correction of the "global imbalance" resulting from the destabilization of the global economy by the U.S. current account deficit in combination with surpluses of China and Japan, Geithner called on Japan and Europe to take a proactive approach, noting that it is not just an issue of the U.S. and China. Regarding the correction of the global imbalance, he was optimistic, saying, "Various countries are firmly determined to deal with the issue."

Asked about the future of the global economy, Geithner said, "The economic recovery is still in the very early stage. Some potential risks remain." He thus stressed the need to continue stimulus measures by calling on various countries not to let their guard down.

Following are the main parts of the interview with U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Geithner:

-- What is your view on the need to reform the G-7? We heard that you proposed at the G-7 on the 3rd that the G-7 be made informal.

"Nobody has decided about the future form of the G-7. What I said at the meeting is that it is necessary to be rather careful so that international conferences, such as the G-7, will not focus on formality or the writing of a joint statement instead of substance. Focus should be on the details of decisions on economic policies or on how to realize better options.

When participants put confidence in each other and speak frankly, then they can smoothly cooperate. A conference must give participants the confidence the gathering is functioning.

-- The G-20 has vowed to correct the global imbalance. Participants

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reached an agreement, in principle. However, isn't it difficult for them to put the agreement into practice? The issue was a

long-standing challenge to Japan and the U.S. Nevertheless, they have failed to settle it.

"The U.S. will increase savings (instead of consumption) in the future.

"Whether (the G-20) is functioning (for the correction of the global imbalance) can only be gauged by whether or not various countries put the agreement into practice. There is no means of forcing on countries things that are not in their interest. However, I learned from the ongoing economic meltdown that stimulus measures, which are usually carried out separately by each country, are effective when implemented in cooperation.

"Indeed, many attempts were made in the past. What is different this time is that we have the G-20. Participating countries are doing remarkable things together. The crisis was so serious that many countries have strong determination to prevent a recurrence and to strive to turn around the global economy. I want to utilize this strong determination.

"The U.S. will boost savings (instead of consumption). Nations, unless they come to terms with low growth, will have no choice but to undergo broad-based changes to achieve growth. China is giving serious thought to whether it can emerge from excessive reliance on exports or investment and bring about change. Imbalance is not just an issue between the U.S. and China. If China starts to address the issue, other emerging countries will also take action. In addition, Japan and the euro zone account for 40 percent of the world's GDP. This is the reality shared by all countries."

-- What is your view on the possibility of the economy sinking into a double-dip recession?

"The current economic recovery is still at the initial stage. There are still considerable potential risks ahead. The greatest mistake repeated in past economic crises is that people quickly feel a sense of relief. It is essential to press ahead with broad-based reform until the recovery becomes full-fledged."

(5) Editorial: Enhance Tokyo's ability to send out messages on IT

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 7, 2009

The CEATEC (Cutting-edge IT & Electronics Comprehensive Exhibition), an international IT fair, has opened at the Makuhari Messe in Chiba City. New technologies in the environmental and other fields are on display, but both the number of participating companies and the floor area for exhibits have declined 70 percent from last year. The number of visitors to events at Makuhari Messe, which is marking its 20th anniversary on October 9, has diminished significantly, compared to events in Europe, China, and other locations. It is necessary for Japan to improve its ability to send out information in order to enhance its international competitiveness.

The number of exhibitors participating in CEATEC this year is 590, 14 less than last year. It is noteworthy that there has been a 40 percent decline in the number of Japanese companies. Major companies like NEC, JVC, and Pioneer have decided not to present their own

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exhibits. One feels that the passageways between exhibits are too wide.

The American CES and the German IFA are the two other major international IT tradeshows. Although the number of visitors to the CES in January, which came right after the "Lehman Shock," dropped by 20 percent, the number of exhibitors was about the same as the previous year. On the other hand, while the number of exhibitors at IFA remains flat, there has been an increase in the number of visitors. Japan seems to be the only one sinking in relative terms.

The Tokyo Motor Show will also be held at the Makuhari Messe in late October. The number of exhibitors is expected to decline to less than half of the number from last year, and the floor area and

duration of the exhibition will be cut significantly. Yet, IT is Japan's forte, and it is odd that Japan alone is experiencing a 30 percent decline.

The organizers say that, "The decrease is due to the economic downturn; there will be a rebound next year." Indeed, there are obvious reasons like the new influenza and corporate cutbacks on business trips. Yet, there is no denying that Japan is beginning to fall behind internationally amid the expansion of the newly emerging markets in Asia. If that is the case, Japan needs to improve its ability to send out information.

First, business operators must have an international perspective and should rectify their inward-looking tendency. South Korea, which is aiming at dominating the world in the field of IT, has increased its number of exhibitors considerably.

Second, environmental improvements to attract visitors more effectively than China, the ROK, and other countries should be implemented. Although the international exhibition center in Shanghai is about 30 kilometers from the Pudong International Airport, it can be reached from the airport in 7 minutes by a linear motor car that travels at a maximum speed of 430 kilometers per hour. Japan should also expand the Haneda Airport and its exhibition facilities in the Tokyo Waterfront City area. There are still very few English street signs even in the Makuhari and Tokyo Waterfront City areas. Although Tokyo was unsuccessful in its bid to host the Olympic Games, it needs to continue to make efforts to publicize Tokyo's strengths and attractions internationally.

ZUMWALT